



Agreement Particulars

As a Commuter ChoiceSM Employer in the Commuter Choice Leadership Initiative, you agree to work with the Commuter Choice Federal Team to further the goals of the program. By voluntarily signing the attached Agreement you agree to undertake activities that will provide your employees with the National Standard of Excellence in commuter benefits as defined in the Agreement and in this Agreement Particulars document.

AGREEMENT CLAUSE

THIS COLUMN PROVIDES DETAILS AND OTHER EXPLANATORY INFORMATION

1. Designate a central point of contact

The central point of contact should be the person who is most familiar with the day-to-day operations of your commuter benefits program.

2. Centralize commuter benefit information so it is easy for employees to find and use

Making information about commuter benefits available to your employees is critical to the success of the initiative and to your efforts. Centralizing the information about your commuter benefits may be done in whatever way that makes most sense for your employees--so that any employee can find information about commuting and commuting options in a single place. You may use a web intranet site, bulletin board (more appropriate for small firms), an appointed individual who has the information readily available, or any other method that makes it quick and easy for employees to get the information. Multi-site employers may choose to maintain separate centralized information sites for separate work sites.

3. Promote the availability of commuter benefits to employees

As a Commuter Choice Employer, you agree to effectively and regularly promote the availability of your benefits package to your employees. Regularly means twice or more per year and at any time your organization makes changes to your programs or offerings. However, more frequent communication is encouraged. You should communicate in ways that are likely to reach all employees.

4a. Provide access to a Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) for employees who do not drive alone to work

Reducing the number of cars that employees drive to work alone means that there will be employees arriving at work without their own private vehicles. Some employees may feel uncomfortable not having a vehicle at their disposal in case of unexpected events, such as illness of a family member or unscheduled overtime. Providing a GRH (e.g., taxi ride) in limited cases of emergencies or unscheduled overtime has cost effectively resolved this issue for many employers. You need not provide this service yourself; in some areas third-party agencies provide GRH services.

4b. Provide at least one of the following benefits:

- Transit or vanpool benefits
- Parking cash out
- Telecommuting
- Another option achieving demonstrable benefits and agreed to by the Federal Team

Transit or vanpool benefits (such as transit passes or vouchers)

Under this option, the Employer agrees to provide at least \$30.00 per month toward commuting via public transit or vanpool for employees whose actual commuting costs are \$30.00 or more, and they are encouraged to provide up to the IRS monthly limit of \$100. If the employees' commuting costs are less than \$30.00, then the Employer must cover 100% of these costs. EPA will give at least 12 months notice prior to an increase in this requirement.

Parking cash out of at least \$30.00 per month

When an employer provides the parking cash out benefit, employees may choose to "cash out" the value of employer-provided parking by foregoing parking, and receive the taxable cash value of the parking in return. The employer may also provide a tax-free transit or eligible vanpool benefit up to the IRS allowable tax-free benefit per month instead of taxable cash, or a combination of vanpool/transit benefits and taxable cash. This strategy works best in locations where parking costs are expensive (e.g., urban cen-

4b. continued

tral business districts), when the parking is leased, and when eliminating a parking space can significantly reduce costs to an employer and provide a significant payout to an employee. Where parking is very inexpensive, this option may not be effective. Under this option, Employers agree to provide at least 75% of the actual saved costs of parking to the employee.

Telecommuting program that reduces on average at least 6% of daily commute trips

Allowing and encouraging employees to work from home provides many benefits to employers and employees while reducing traffic and air pollution. Under this option, the Employer agrees to offer a telecommuting program that reduces the number of commute trips by 6%. This means that for every 100 commute trips, six or more are avoided by telecommuting. For example, in a 20-day month a 100-person firm has 2000 possible commute trips (20 days x 100 people = 2000 possible commute trips). To achieve a 6% participation rate, employees would work from home to avoid at least 120 of those workdays (2000 x 6% = 120 workdays).

An equivalent option proposed by the Employer that achieves demonstrable benefits and is agreed to by the Federal Team

Recognizing that different strategies will work for different employers and in different locations, a Commuter Choice Employer may propose an alternative option or benefits package, as long as the Employer and the Federal Team together can demonstrate that it will reduce the rate at which employees drive alone to and from the work site at least as successfully as other options, and that employees perceive the option as a significant workplace benefit. Options may include things like comprehensive shuttle services and very aggressive and successful ridesharing.

4c. And, three or more additional options from among these, or as proposed by the Employer and agreed to by the Federal Team

Note: Employers with fewer than 20 employees may provide one or more options

1. Active membership in a Transportation Management Association (TMA) or similar organization
2. Ridesharing or carpool matching, either in-house or through local or regional agency
3. Pre-tax transit or vanpool benefits
4. Parking cash out less than \$30.00 per month or less than 75% of the actual parking benefit
5. Shuttles from transit stations, either employer-provided or through a local transportation management association or similar service provider
6. Parking at park-and-ride lots or vanpool staging areas
7. Provision of intelligent (i.e., real-time) commuting information
8. Preferred parking for carpools and vanpools
9. Reduced parking costs for carpools and vanpools
10. Employer run vanpools or subscription bus programs
11. Employer assisted vanpools
12. Secure bicycle parking, showers and lockers
13. Electric bicycle recharging stations
14. Employee commuting awards programs
15. Discounts and coupons for bicycles for bicyclists or shoes for walkers
16. Compressed work schedules
17. Telecommuting
18. Lunchtime shuttle
19. Proximate commute (where employees work at locations closer to their home)
20. Incentives to encourage employees to live closer to work
21. On-site amenities (e.g., convenience mart, dry cleaning, etc.)
22. Concierge services
23. Other options as proposed by the Employer

5. Exceed a minimum level of employee participation

**-14% non-SOV
or
- 1.12 AVR/AVO**

One of the Commuter Choice Leadership Initiative's primary goals is to recognize employers that provide their employees with a package of commuter benefits that represents a National Standard of Excellence. In addition to providing an excellent package of benefits and in order to maintain the integrity of the concept of Excellence, the qualifying work sites must meet or exceed a minimum performance level for employee participation. That

performance level is at least 14% of employees not driving alone to work (the average commuting behavior for non-MSA areas in the U. S.). Alternatively, employers may exceed an average vehicle ridership (AVR) or average vehicle occupancy (AVO) of 1.12. Employers agree to meet the performance level within 18 months of joining and continuously after that. The Federal Team strongly encourages you to surpass this performance benchmark.

6. Report program progress and success to EPA

As a Commuter Choice Employer, you must annually report to the Federal Team to indicate your continuing participation in the initiative and to provide a few details about your program. Every two years, you must provide information on the commuting choices of your workforce. You may report using a written reporting form or electronically by e-mail or on the World Wide Web once available. To reduce the need for duplicate reporting by the Employer, the Federal Team will do everything it can to accept reports in different formats that the Employer may already be producing for other purposes (e.g., for state- or locally-sponsored commuter programs).

Will this agreement change?

Yes. The Federal Team will make changes to the Agreement as changes in the market dictate. However, participants will be provided with plenty of notice prior to any substantive changes and may choose to continue or discontinue participation at any time.

INFORMATION FOR MULTI-SITE EMPLOYERS

Many employers have work sites in more than one location with different commuting circumstances. An employer may join this initiative by agreeing to apply the provisions at one or more of their work sites. An effective commuter benefits package is likely to differ from site to site depending on the employees' needs and locations. The following describes how a multi-site employer may register one, some, or all of its work sites.

What is a work site?

A work site is not necessarily an individual building, but is defined by the transportation environment within which it is located. For instance, several buildings on a corporate campus may be considered a single work site. Similarly, spaces in two buildings in the same urban core may be considered a single work site. Also, several locations all in the same rural county, even if widely separated but in the same transportation environment, may be considered a single site. On the other hand, even if locations are in close proximity but are in distinctly different environments, they should be considered separate work sites. For instance, an office near a rail station may only be a few miles from a suburban office not well served by transit. These should be considered separate work sites for purposes of this initiative.

How many work sites may I register?

You may join at only one work site, at all of your work sites, or anything in between, provided that each work site meets the requirements of the initiative.

Can different work sites offer different commuter benefits?

Yes. The actual package of benefits that is offered to employees will likely differ from site to site, depending on the commuting needs and available transportation options at each. Because of the varying transportation environments, you will need to provide individual reports for each registered work site.

How do I add additional work sites?

You may register new work sites to the agreement at any time by notifying the Federal Team and providing the requested information about the new sites. If the program or its administration is significantly different, it may be appropriate to sign an additional agreement.

How do I register work sites?

On the second page of the agreement is a table that asks for a few pieces of information about each work site you would like to register. Just fill in the table with the selected work sites and include that information with the signed agreement. If you need more room, you may use additional sheets.